

TOWN OF MILLVILLE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING

MARCH 21, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board Members Present: Chairman Roland Barrett; Vice Chairman Joseph Rapoza; Secretary Jennifer Dean Wing; Robert Baker and John Laura

Others Present: Executive Secretary Helen Coffin

At 8:40 p.m. Chairman Barrett advises that the Board wishes to enter Executive Session under MGL c.30A section 21, paragraph 2 to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel in connection with the Executive Secretary position. Upon exiting Executive Session, the Board will only return to regular session to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion by Laura and second by Rapoza, the Board votes by Roll Call to enter Executive Session under MGL c.30A section 21, paragraph 2 to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel in connection with the Executive Secretary position, and upon exiting Executive Session, the Board will only return to regular session to adjourn the meeting. Barrett, aye; Rapoza, aye; Wing, aye; Baker, aye; Laura, aye

Mrs. Coffin asks if she should leave the meeting. John Laura asks that she stay.

Vice Chairman Rapoza reminds all that the Executive Secretary's contract expires June 30th and the Board is required to provide a 90-day notice of termination. However, not knowing what will happen going forward with the new Town Administrator position, the Board should prepare a contingency plan. He worked with Attorney Brian Maser who provided a draft Temporary contract. This contract can be used in an intermittent period such as 60 days beginning July 1st. But the first step is voting to have Town Counsel prepare a 90-day termination letter.

Motion by Wing and second by Rapoza, to not renew the employment agreement between the Town and Executive Secretary that is to expire June 30, 2016, thus ending her employment with the Town, and to authorize Town Counsel to draft a letter notifying Mrs. Coffin of the non-renewal of the agreement.

Discussion: Selectman Laura is not in favor of terminating the agreement without first having a Plan B in place. He does not want to leave the Town without coverage and feels that terminating the existing contract first will leave the Town wide open. He does not have the warm and fuzzies about the way this matter is going.

Chairman Barrett isn't in agreement with a 40-hour Town Administrator and feels a part-time Administrator is sufficient, and Mrs. Coffin should be retained by the Town to continue doing

the majority of the administrative work that she currently does – he references the items in the job description. He also feels that before terminating the agreement the Board needs to have assurances that the day-to-day work will continue to get done as it has for the past 10 years.

Vice Chairman Rapoza indicates that this can be addressed with the temporary contract and the Board can negotiate a timeframe.

Selectman Wing states that contrary to what some may believe, she is in favor of a temporary agreement with Mrs. Coffin in order to provide for a smooth transition.

Selectman Laura questions Mrs. Coffin on her feelings about a 60-day temporary contract. Mrs. Coffin indicates that after working as Executive Secretary for the past 10 years, receiving all above-average performance evaluations, and making a proposal to the Selectmen which included that she stay on as Assistant, she would not be in favor of a 60-day temporary contract.

Chairman Barrett feels Mrs. Coffin should be kept on as Assistant as she is valuable to the Town. Selectman Wing believes the new Town Administrator should be able to hire who he/she wants and determine the hours needed, and if the new Town Administrator wants to retain Mrs. Coffin after the temporary period expires, then he/she will be authorized to do so. Selectman Laura feels a one-year temporary contract would be more appropriate given Mrs. Coffin's years with the Town. Vice Chairman Rapoza again indicates that this could be achieved with the temporary contract. Selectman Wing indicates that if this was the case, the position could only be part-time because of the funding. Barrett believes he knows the real reason why the position can only be part-time and it has to do with certain individuals.

Baker states that he has made his point in the past on this issue. He feels this entire situation has been rushed so he intends to abstain from any voting. Further, if he were Mrs. Coffin he would have already left this meeting.

Selectman Wing feels negotiating a temporary contract can be done during another executive session but the Board needs to first end the current contract or the Town will be liable and asks for a vote on the motion on the table.

ROLL CALL: Wing, aye; Rapoza, aye; Baker, abstain; Laura, nay; Barrett, aye

ADJOURN

On a motion by Wing and second by Baker, the Board votes unanimously to adjourn the Executive Session at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen M. Coffin

Roland P. Barrett, Chairman

Joseph Rapoza, Vice Chairman

Jennifer Dean Wing, Secretary

John Laura, Selectman